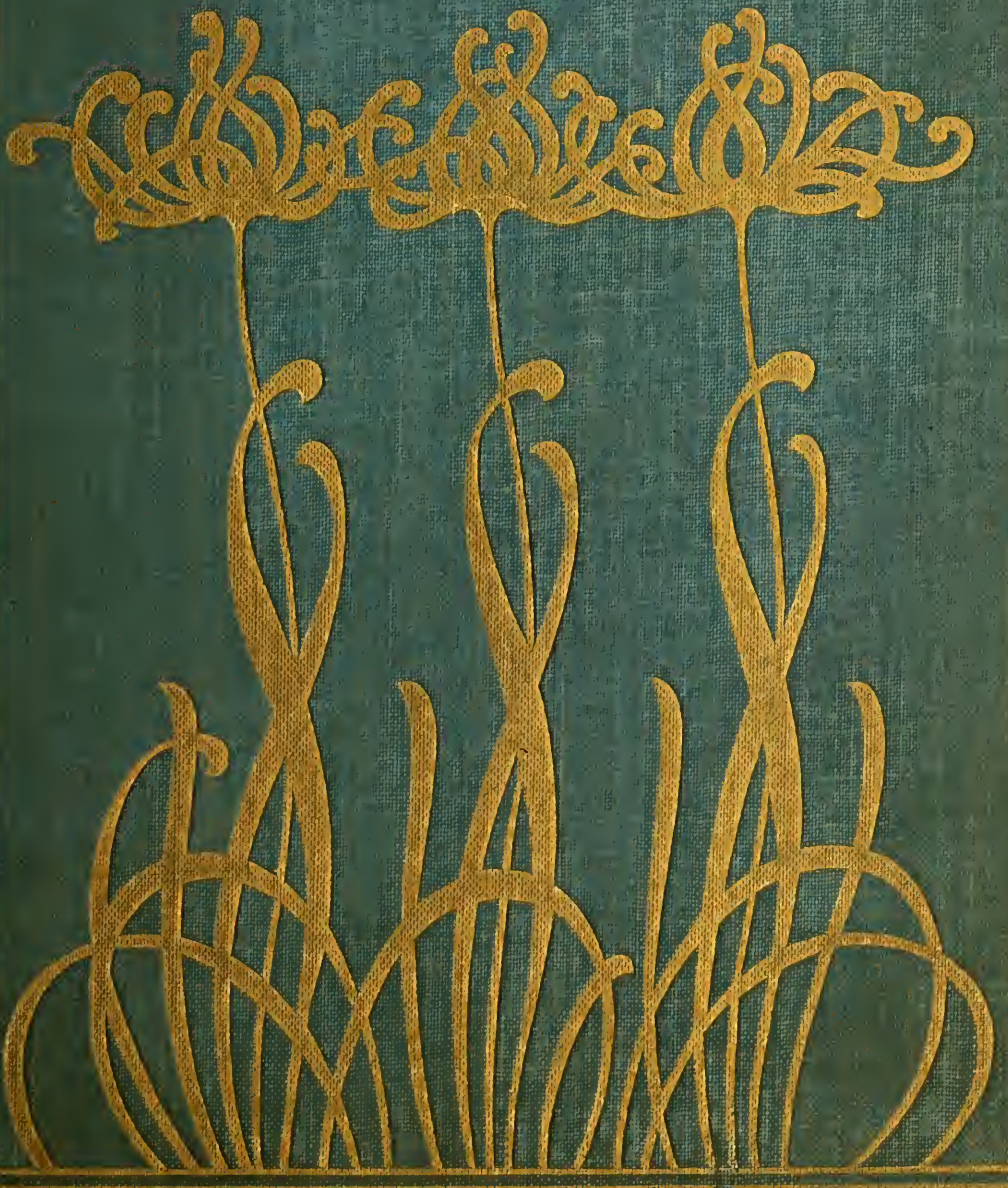
FROM ME TO YOU

LILLIAN GERTRUDE SHUMAN



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FROM ME TO YOU

BY

LILLIAN GERTRUDE SHUMAN

"So must I wrap my song into a shell,
And never murmur if men say, 'Not well!'"

BOSTON
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1898

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From Me to You.

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To My Parents

IN REVERENCE

259346

FROM ME TO YOU

Into the garden of my life
I gayly went one golden day,
To gather flowers standing rife,
'Mid banks where memories' shadows sway.

Full many blooms the herd among
I knew not, either name or seed,
So strange the years about them clung,
To dim the mists that wrought the deed.

From out the garden of my life
I sadly passed one darkening day,
For there I plucked, 'mid wakening strife,
A bud that pale and wistful lay.

And will you take this flower of mine,
This soul so frail and yet so true,
And will you guard it through all time?
From me to you — from me to you.

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"ENOUGH" OF THEE?

"Enough" of thee?
Nay, tire the winds of crooning to the lea?
Do waves have fill of lapping the near shore?
Do not the skies ask stars for more and more?
Do sun's rays ever weary of the earth?
Do trees cease yearning to the cloud's white birth?
Does pure-faced moon forget her long-tried plight?
Does day e'er satiate the claiming night?
Does mated song of birds have one whit less
Of longing than was heard in Time's first stress?
Need flowers hide their wanting from the bee?
How can I have "enough," dear love, of thee?

THE SPIRIT OF EMPTINESS.

The Spirit of Emptiness lies abroad,
Out there in the night it burrows its hoard,
It takes from the lap of the still-born sea,
It steals from the honied sack of the bee,
And rushes along, and all in a trice
It filches the soul of a man sans price;
It wears many faces on different days,
Like the lettered clouds through the sun-strewn
maze.
Ah, me! when I saw it last on the plain,
'Twas a little bird that I chased in vain.

"SO SOME OF HIM LIVED, BUT MOST OF HIM DIED, EVEN AS YOU AND I."

RUDYARD KIPLING'S "The Vampire."

The best of us dies when something within
Gives way, in our youth, to the stress and din
That eats out the soul of our hope and faith
(The whole at the start but the merest wraith).
But we live just the same, and choke the need
That yearns to the higher and better creed;
And we fold our hands as we learn to sift
From the heartache and haunt that, dark-veiled, lift
The form of the past-dreams we took for dead,
But were only buried half-way instead.

"TOI."

One tree stark black against the sky,
One sunbeam cutting from on high,
One cloud that spread until it grew
Into the shape of you — of you!

One mountain flecked with untold gold,
One hollow resting in its fold,
One bird that ever swifter flew,
Breaking my heart for you — for you!

THE SHADOWED ORPHEUS.

I.

The lagging day is done, and from its throne
  Unwillingly the sun slips to the west,
The pillared clouds from out the curtained dome
  Of heaven scamper merrily to rest;
Through the dim distance fades the surging song
  Of feathered love, and over all the earth
The welcome night throws out its mantle long.
  Twilight outfades, and hails the gladdening birth
Of storied winds, and busy, cantering leaves;
  Darkness appears, but like some weary, spent,
And longing Orpheus, one great shadow heaves
  In hazy likeness, and with eyes intent

II.

Upon the blood-drained sky. With outstretched arms,
Across the star-swept, veinless space it grows,
Faltering the steps as with some vague alarms
Inborn. Through the still air the pulsing throes
Of tender, yearning music rise and fall,
And all the close-drawn strings from heaven to man
Vibrate and snap as with some sad, rapt call,
Straining and eager 'neath their tensioned span
Of voice. Slowly the air gathers its fold
Of pleading winds, and chance-tossed, dreaming sighs;
Gently, with waiting breath, the watered gold
Of moon-floods streams athwart the skies.

III.

Then sways my shadowed Orpheus, and the strain
  That binds the dim-perceived Eurydice
Breaks as he turns, and all the termless pain
  Of heartache and of self-wrought misery
Bursts through the realms of pining, thirsting night,
  Thrilling the watchers strewn upon earth's ways,
Echoing unceasing and with weary might
  Through the great silence of unending days,
Draining the sleep from countless tired eyes,
  Filling with years the worn-out, listening brains,
Chilling the hopes of thronging, prayered cries,
  Doling to man his well-earned meed of pains.

TREE-THOUGHT.

Did you ever think how trees in the wind
Were like human souls that had one time sinned?
How they bow and they beg, and push and sway,
Through the endless night and the endless day, —
How they gnash in their rage and wanton pain,
How they rear erect but to fall again;
How the lashing Fate scars the under-dread,
And wails through the boughs till they weigh like lead;
And how, when at eve the man-world's asleep,
They endlessly scream and endlessly weep?

HARVEST MOON.

The evening its tattered wings has spread,
And lowering, dropped to earth's rocky bed,
And a yellow moon, like a second sun,
Has burst through the night in the fight just won:
The clouds are all fringed with its purpled fumes,
And the ashy gray that the gold consumes;
The tree-limbs are stark with their livid bath,
And murmur in fear, and with ghostly laugh,
While out of the night-haze that creeps apace,
I see but as ever, the one drawn face,
The waving hair by the winds inly pressed,
And the sad, lost eyes that my "Warum" guessed.

UNANSWERED.

Do you hear the soughing of the wind,
You there in your beaten fortress pinned,
Do you see the trees bend down toward
The spot where the rain-pools dent the sod,
  Down there in the silent gloaming?

Do you see how the leaves show underneath
The paling and pulling cypress wreath,
And darkening of sky and earth and air
And warning of eyes that promised fair,
  Down there where my heart is roaming?

And do you feel that the storm is near,
And do you know that the spring is here,
A sickly spring with a time-worn face,
Like the searéd lines of David's race,
  Down deep in life's waters foaming?

And heard you not how the night made screech,
And saw you not how my arms did reach,
For the starred ghost that passed again,
For the dream that fleeing burst the pain —
Down there where the boughs make moaning?

IN THE TWILIGHT.

When the sun is darkening
  And twilight appears,
When Nature is hearkening
  For earth-children's tears,
When dreams are awaking
  And God stands and waits,
When shadows are breaking
  And sin at heart quakes,
When star-worlds in glory
  Resplendent forthshine,
And moon-drifts so hoary
  Ages' silver design,
Then come thoughts so holy
  Of time that is past,
Then am I thine solely —
  Ah, if it could last!

THE ROSE AND THE CYPRESS-LEAF.

I had a rose and a cypress-leaf,
And the one sighed, "Life, oh, life is brief!"
But the other laughed, and sang in glee,
"No matter the end — Life's joy for me!"

And I kept them both this many year,
Till the hopes that fed them long were sere,
And the rose, poor soul! is withered quite,
But the cypress-leaf is green and bright.

THE THREE SOULS.

I.

My first soul, he of outside growth,
He laughed and prattled, nothing loath,
And took and gave and ventured high
The trickster world to satisfy.
He showed unto the questioning gaze
Of neighbor eye no mystic maze,
But that which was he, lived he plain,
Nor sought for deeper heart-born pain;
He had no care for morrow's claim,
Nor chancéd yesterdays all lame;
He seized his due, and paid his due,
As well to me — as well to you.

II.

My second soul, for every day,
The one that faltered on his way,
He was a mask to fill the space
Of hourly nothings in the race,
He shrewder was, of unkempt mien,
He fought against my teachings e'en,
He pandered to the gain and cost,
Yet sighed he not for that once lost,
He knew the wheat from tare, and yet
Grim habit could no footing get.
He was of social, homely will,
No stirring dreams, nor fancied ill;
He ventured seldom from the path,
Nor relished much my aftermath,
But that which said I — "thou must do,"
That did he well — for me, for you.

III.

My third soul, he of inside birth,
He struggled forth to tortured earth;
He never showed his greatest might,
Nor ever saw day's brightest light;
He, too, rebelled, but still and long,
And no man wist the secret wrong;
He vastly saw, yet could not be,
That which the mates asked, carelessly.
He moments knew when all the world
In tumult through his veins lay curled,
He shunned in timid fear so much,
All that profaned by common touch —
So far away in night he crept,
And there in anguish ceaseless wept —
God's conscience had he — stained yet true —
Deep buried though — like me, like you.

THE MEED.

Out into all the endless track of night
I fling my very self that will not rest;
It falters, waits, and then with blinded sight
Sinks downward to the dream-lit, visioned breast.

And in that patient heart I find the meed,
The very want that wasted all the day,
And drink and drink to quench the year-fed need,
Till fadest thou, oh blessed Love, away!

AUTUMN.

The autumn comes, and in its frenzied wake
  Buds' tears, and whirl of falling leaf-souls vast,
And harrowed winds that bloodied wine-tops slake,
  And cold-breathed dawns that shudder from
    their fast.

And star-drenched clouds that falter, wist and
    shorn,
  And withered skies, and moons of steely gold,
And frosted sod, and echoed faith long gone,
  And poor Love out there shivering in the cold.

MOON-DRIFTS.

The clouds were jealous of the moon to-night;
They bound and wrapped her, and hid her from
sight,
Save once, when with bandaged eye and nose,
She 'scaped her captors and suddenly rose,
Majestic in robings of silver gleen,
That trailed far beneath to the water's sheen;
The spun-silk that shimmered and shivered by,
The pale, liquid fire that dripped from on high.

"WHICH?"

I wonder which the hardest is to bear,
Drowse of tears wept, or the deep choking wear
Of those unwept — the flood-gates opened wide,
And all the wrecks of overflowing tide,
Or the pent anguish — that which rends the soul,
Which wastes the sinew, and makes bare the whole
Of strife — the outward smile, the pleasing vein
Of life-faced talk — while deep within the pain
Of barréd waters and the rush of will,
Shivers laughter and sweats the mask of ill.

THE EARTH'S CREATION.

Once, — long ago,
Before Time's dearth,
Though yet the glow
Of Sun with birth
Of Sin was red —
Above, in sport,
From unknown led,
An impish thought
Of Satan born,
Played round about
From dusk till morn —
For weeds will sprout
While flowers pure,
E'en by their side
Are sent no cure
For death. At hide
And seek with star
And moon it long
Did play — then far
Away its song.

Was heard — a new
Toy had it found.
From heaven's blue,
Across all sound
To bubbles blow
Was now its chief
Delight, and so
It came to grief,
For one poor ring
Of shape like all
Its mates — a thing
Most weak and small —
In falling, clung
To space, and there
Suspended hung;
Far out in air
It ever grew,
And soon with birth
Of creatures new,
Was called the "Earth,"
Its children — "Man."
Like to some art,

In love with plan
Of Nature, part
Of itself so
Perfects that it
Rivals Her who
Gave it writ
To live — so, high
Above all space,
Old Satan's eye
Ne'er closed — apace
His wonder welled —
The Imp in pride
And glory swelled —
Still there they bide
As they did then,
They laugh at all
Its woe, as when
They saw it fall —
They ever wait,
And marvel much
It does not break
At Time's dread touch.

FRAGMENT.

The bud of morn lives not to flower;
Seize thou thy joy, for brief's the hour,
Drain out thy cup in spite of pain,
Life's tears will fill it up again.

SUNSET.

(*To* G. L. S.)

Rose steps mounting, flight on flight,
Vast from earth's remotest height;
Gold tints stretching, hue on hue,
Dim across all heaven's blue;
Drifting clouds by moon-glints pressed,
Stamped in glory — Nature's crest —
Livid shadows, purpling long,
Crossed in circles by bird's song;
Reddening sun-glow, God's own face,
In the quavering mist of lace;
Veil of hazy, gleaming light
Thrown o'er all the glorious sight!

TENANTLESS.

The forehead of Night was puckered and drawn
With voiceless, surged dreams of Man's travail born,
And Silence outpealed and cravingly pled,
The Soul of the World that woke and outspread.

But sorrowful Winds compassionate heard,
And smoothed the crossed brow with pitying word,
And whispered good cheer the turbulent sea,
Then fled and were drowned in Night's mystery.

ABSENCE.

Oh Love, my Love, now thou art gone again,
And manifold of deed and speech has fled,
And distance shakes a wearied finger when
I call and call, and beg for thee instead
Of icy silence and the after-fear
That claims its own, and goads its trackless way
Into my heart that trembles, hurt and sear.
Wilt thou not answer if all through the day
And longer peopled night I endless wait,
If through the tired hours I toil and serve,
And never murmur though the spring days slake,
If I abide nor ever slightly swerve,
Wilt thou return and wash the darkened years,
And bind my heart, and stem my ceaseless tears?

NIGHT'S SCROLL.

I.

Hast seen the scroll of color rise,
Gold to crimson, crimson to blue,
Then, deepening through the bursting skies,
The spreading purple's royal hue,
The pinnacles of gray and dove,
Like longing arms stretched out to take
The dream forms of forbidden love,
Like angels' wings that fleeing wake
The soul that haunts us unaware?

II.

This hast thou seen, and then the height
Of rose — the blending into cloud —
The pouring of the whole great white
Of fleecy haze — the pressing crowd
Of dwindling shapes that seem to loom

And grow — and then how down around,
The trees take blackness and the gloom
Of night — each leaf clear cut — all sound
Suspended, save the roar of self ?

III.

All this saw I, or dreamt it in my sleep,
Only that far below the darkening world,
A river ran, as still as souls that weep,
Deep shining, and within, as anger hurled,
The fiery image of the sinking sky,
That ever outward fled, until at last
The inky cover swung on hinges high,
And shut the quivering sight into the past
And left me hopeless on the sands of life !

MEMORY.

Pale memory rose and whispered to me,
"Come, come for a taste of my misery!"
And it stalked abroad through hot-rayed sun,
Till the daisies ashened, one by one:
And I turned a-weary from the sight,
But the Thing, it laughed in reddening light,
And echoed afar its frenzied call,
Till the night at last began to fall,
And the draining winds soothed out the sound,
And the darkness drifted all around.

"MY SUNBEAM."

(*To* S. S.)

The room was still and dark,
Each object dim and stark;
I sat and listened long
To wind-bursts' haunted song,
Till lo! upon the floor,
Like hoarded scholar's lore,
A sunbeam made its lair,—
And told that thou wert there!

APRIL.

The Dawn arose, and from its heaving breast
Poured forth its bird-thrilled, echoing song of rest;
And shadowed moon and star crept shyly back
Before the splendor of the Day's glad track.

And as I list, and caught the holy play
Of pendant airs and budding tree-eyes' way,
I heard a voice from out the April hum,
That sobbed despair, and, choking, whispered,
"Come."

INERTIA.

The great pulse is ever
beating, beating;
The dread time is ever
fleeting, fleeting;
Hear its quickening heart throbs
dulling, dulling,
Whisp'ring how base minds waste,
lulling, lulling
Actions into past life.
Dreaming, dreaming
Seem I ever — moon-like,
gleaming, gleaming,
Not with self-light, but with
seeming, seeming!

GLEAMS.

The dull against the sky
Of crimson, and the rock of blue —
The cradle of the stars —
And then, — the whole earth shining through !

So saintly, pure, and purged
Of mortal touch — a tree, a cloud —
And now beyond — the fear !
My dream moon, virgin of her shroud !

TO SLEEP.

To bed and to sleep and to rest at last
From the fevered dreams of the day that's past,
From the wanton hurts of the wanton great,
And the tortured nerves of the hidden fate,
From the weary toil and the duty strife,
And the fawning self with its breast wounds rife,
To the pitying sleep and the thought of Thee,
And forgetfulness of the dawn to be.

STANZAS AT NIGHT.

I.

The day has out-faded, and night burns low,
And the winds are tired of pushing so,
And poor labored Eros has bruised his wings,
And fallen to earth, where he hollow sings.

II.

There's a place in the clouds where the sky makes
dent,
And unveils its bosom with star-worlds rent,
And it trails along until heaven and sea
Are lost in the foam of eternity.

III.

Sorrowing wind met sorrowing sea,
And they both sighed, "Woe, oh, woe is me!"
Till the night took up the burdened lay,
And oozed it forth till the break of day.

IV.

Where a haloed cloud bends dark-circled eyes,
A wan, struggling moon bursts the pale-faced skies,
And wavers and dims through the star-dipped
realm,
Like a stricken ship that has lost its helm.

v.

The wind was asleep, but it woke to-night,
And it slipped and it swayed and wrapped me tight,
And it haunted my heart, till heart and soul
Were one with the silvery crescent's bowl.

VI.

The sails of the sky are out-flung to the breeze,
And my thoughts are seared like the tortured seas,
And the ways of men and their canny lore
Are as dim to me as the Tropic's shore.

GOD'S THRONE.

I thought I stood bareheaded 'fore the throne of God.
The morning's dew and evening's depth were naught beside
The greatening, dreaming peace that folded me about.
And then those eyes, deep-felt, deep-wept, and yet unseen,
Which judgment spoke, and set my trembling heart aglow:
I knew I must be infinite, and yet unheard,
And so I waited, seeing my heart's life review
Itself in all its solemn errors, griefs, and acts.
Then came a voice from out the silenced whole, that spoke
In accents — oh, so sweet and sad! and wrung my last

Few tears away, unheeded. As in a far dream
I heard my once-time name pronounced, and then a great
Burst of meaning, that chided not, nor judged, but wept
Instead, and understanding so, all knowing so,
The life of human souls, wondered and wondered e'en,
Not how ill we did, but that in face of living
We so well had come for rest at last, and then I
Knew that this indeed was God, and God's great word to man —
To struggle and o'ercome within our utmost powers,
But with fainting e'er to know that mercy leavens
Justice — that God lives with us, and must know our ways,
Must see Temptation in its very quick, must feel
All human stress and pain, and so with pity,
Not with frowning brows, receive the final kneeler,
Prostrate 'fore the throne where sinners bow, and saints are

Made to men. And so I woke, and turned once more to
See the image in my soul-world of my own best
Self, and knew that motive was more acting e'en than deed,
That hunger, though it ne'er be satisfied, must teach
Our limitations how to grow, and be that whole
Which Love produces, and alone can fructify.

A THOUGHT.

The lights burn low in the broad, dim square,
While deep from the darkness faltering there,
The human wishings slowly out-creep,
All hungrily calling, seeking sleep.

And shadows lengthen, and sounds grow slight,
And wearied man seeks opiate night,
And the heart-free sky looks down and smiles
On the mortal will and mortal wiles.

FIRELIGHT.

Dear — fold thy slight hands : let the light rest so
Upon thy waning face. Raise the dear eyes
And let their wist depths speak. The fire's glow
Hints all the pale of roses that arise
Out of thy cheeks and round thy shadowed lip —
Rest so — ne'er stir, until the flame's low wane
Sends back my heart that is a wasted ship —
Sends back my heart that calls in vain — in vain.

DAY-BIRTH.

The shadowed night a-tiptoe spreads his wings,
And through the moon-wet branches sobs farewell.
The heaving earth in proud abandon flings
Her bounty forth, to drown the day-birth's knell.

The deep-toned throats of birds burst with their song,
And tired stars creep back before light's thong,
And all the throes of toil and labored man
Find voice and echo in the dawning van —
The while Fate sits and laughs in waiting ease,
With careful eye the dearest prize to seize.

"SO LONG AS THOU ABIDE."

What matter if the days bring dearth,
What matter if all through the earth
The deepening knell of "finis" stride,
So long as thou, my Love, abide!

What matter if life's faces dull,
What matter if Hope's echoes lull,
Or if, in passing, dreams must glide,
So long as thou, my Love, abide!

And if in onward grind of years,
My eyes must deeper fill with tears,
What matter if God's ends still hide —
Wilt thou not nearer, Love, abide!

NOVEMBER.

A gray and bitter sky,
And from its peakéd depths,
A moon with white, set face
And hollow, haggard eye.

An earth that autumn stains
With dying, heart-torn leaves,
With trees all ghastly bare,
And wand'ring wind-birth's pains.

This is the world I see,
While winter's shadow looms,
And drowsy airs press chill
To Love's ne'er-stilling sea.

THE GOAL.

Down in the muffled storehouse of the soul,
  The bartered goals of my poor day I lay,
And pause in scorn 'fore the encompassed whole
  Of empty words and idle, childish play.
For that which I did lightly dream to be,
  It passed me by in rightful, mocking sport —
And that which was the imaged self I see,
  It is not worthy of the battle fought.

ELDORADO.

I walked upon a bridge of dreams,
Far away in the wild, dark night,
And they that saw me through moon's beams,
Shivered and hastened on in fright.

One asked — he was so great and tall,
With raven hair and deep-set eyes —
"Where goest thou, and what thy call
Beneath the weary, wasted skies?"

"I seek for One that I heard tell
Was perfect justice — perfect peace —
Canst say where shall I find, where quell
The brain-fires that will never cease?"

But He of calm-souled eye and mouth
Laughed on in jest with all the rest,

"Fair Eldorado — far to south
It lies — on the horizon's breast!"

But though I wandered far and fast,
And questioned much with tireless zest,
My bridge of clouds lay torn at last,
Without one tiding of my guest.

"TO GAIN A WORLD."

A word, a thought,
  A breath of flowering plant;
A shade, a naught,
  To wake life's sweetest chant;
A pause, a look,
  A dream of golden lea;
The Path forsook —
  To gain a world — and thee!

NATURE'S CALDRON.

There is a caldron vast, down by the sea,
That Nature steeps her gorgeous colors in.
There Browning looked, and saw the wondrous lea
Where boiled such dawns as Pippa's worship win.
There Shakespeare peered, and mightily grew blind,
Till sun of Juliet's East arose and spread,
And heralded the play of Brutus' mind.
There gasped the lake-toned Wordsworth — gazed
and fled,
And left a wond'ring Shelley to unfold
A blaze of beauty — love and song and cloud,
Until the God-touched bursts Rossetti told
Sank 'fore the minor strains that Lowell shroud.
And once, when most the fumes of pitless blue
Hung shining through a sky-spun maze of gold,
And lily-hued the wave-crests welled and flew,
Goethe stole silent, and with thought-strokes bold,

Unfurled a dream of Faustus and his art
That held the age in wonder, and gave birth
To peal on peal of plaudits from the heart
Of awestruck listeners all throughout the earth.

LOVE: AN ALLEGORY.

I sat one day in lonely thought.
A child passed by, by life-chance brought —
It stopped, and questioning, tears in eyes,
Like chilly rains, in springtime's skies,
Held forth a flower — crumpled, torn —
Of all its beauties ruthless shorn —
"Why does it die?" lips drooping asked,
With wond'ring pain, the wee heart tasked —
I paused for answer — eyes still pled —
"God wills it so!" was all I said.

GLIMPSES.

I.

ENGLAND BETWEEN BOLTON ABBEY AND KETTLEWELL.

Green flooded, blue between,
Gold dipped, without a seam,
Fields heaving, flecked with sheep,
Mounts bending, where valleys peep—
Shadows passing, naught to tell,
Nature's daft workshop — all's well!
Realms of cloudland, ripped and pressed
By the weight of heaven's breast,
Fainting arms spread out to clasp
Fleeting gleams forever past;
Chariot ruts Apollo left,
Steeped in rainbow, cleft on cleft;
Sad-eyed drift of coming cloud,
Wet wind rushing heavy-browed,
Stirring memory's tolling bell—
Sun has died — "to Kettlewell!"

II.

YORKSHIRE MOUNTAINS, NEAR HAWES.

A far-dipping stretch of moorland,
Four mountains, and one peaked hill;
Beyond, framed by a deep, green band,
A shadow — master-hands so spill!
High up, black with birds, one lone tree;
Heaven's heart-strings straining to earth,
Through the gold rays — no eye to see —
The eternal sob — Death's re-birth.

III.

NEAR WIGTON, CUMBERLAND.

Dull smoke of cloud-fires in the west,
A mount-top looming from their crest,
Its sides bespattered with the floods
Of bloody heather sprays and buds;
A field high stacked with row on row

Of filing oats, each bending low,
All waiting for the magic word
That's ever list for — never heard:
The word of wondrous varied tongue
From hills and vales and woods among,
To fill the air with songster's chime,
The heart-burst of an older time;
The sighing of the rooted tree
That ever longs to upward flee;
The shivering of the stately grass,
The mirrored thoughts of lake's pure glass,
The flower's homage to its love,
The mocking of the blue above,
The fury of imprisoned wind,
All screeching mouths for ages pinned,
The myriad voices ever stilled
To everlasting silence willed,
To pant for aye half understood —
Could I but talk — God knows I would.

IV.

DERWENTWATER, KESWICK.

(FRAGMENT.)

I saw a hill-slope dripping with heather
Spurts, the flowing wounds mixing together
In hollow dents; I saw a cloud mid-air
Suspended; I saw the inner lights where
Sunset waned; I saw the bulrushes sway
And nod, like hoary gossips hearkened they
To tales told by the whispering wind; I heard
The lulling splash of water, shore on-lured
By green, spread arms; I heard the awful fight
Of silence pressing down the pointed height;
I felt the evening haze sink on the earth,
And mighty groans suppressed throughout its girth.

V.

KIRKSTONE PASS, NEAR AMBLESIDE.

Clear through the mist, head reared on high,
A pyramid, encompassed nigh
By rugged hills, by dripping fog,
And whitening 'gainst the yellowed bog,
A stream, down-pouring to the dale,
Stern Nature's primal wedding-veil!
Barren slopes littered with débris,
Floods of carved rocks — a mighty sea,
While yonder, smoking in wet gear,
A lake-locked valley — Windermere!

VI.

THIRLMERE LAKE, NEAR GRASMERE.

Just as though God had stooped down low,
And, smiling, scooped the hollowed bow,
And there, where rested the great hand,
Gushed the sweet water, earth enspanned.

THE REAL.

So strange dreams to commingle so with real!
Erstwhile the fantasy so visioned loomed,
And now to-day I clasp it in my hand,
And lightly hold the wish that seemed so doomed.

It turns to be my daily shadowed mate,
Caressing mè with strangely half-shown hopes,
And yet through all the wist-lipped fact and growth
I ever see the first-dreamt dawning slopes.

Is it because the Whole End never comes,
The Potter giving but the half-done vase,
And that no perfect joy can stand and wait,
But ever tear-stained flees in after-chase?

I cannot answer this, and shun the guess.
I stretch my arms to hold the wondrous thing.
Will it abide and cleave to earthly shape?
Nay, 'neath the sun's glow hides the shadow's wing.

THE WOOING.

The wind swayed the tree,
And sighed, "Pity me;
All the world's a-wooing."

The tree bent to kiss,
With no thought amiss,
Her heart in joy subduing.

But the wind it quaffed,
And then fleeing, laughed,
Left to its own undoing.

For woe to the one
That's too quickly won!
For him there's no renewing.

THE ALTAR GATE.

I cast my soul out in the dark, wild night,
To seek in bitter race its anguished mate;
And then with fevered brow the pulseless I
Sits listening, listening at the altar gate.

But when at last, in torpid, gray-mouthed dawn,
The wasted dream comes helpless, limping back,
It cannot speak for wreck of mighty sobs
And lonesome wakenings from the perished track.

THE PERFECT DAY.

One morn, far down amongst the flowers fair,
There bloomed a rose of scent and shape so rare
That ne'er its equal was in garden known.
On that same day a beauteous thought was sown,
Which, ripening, threw a halo 'round the brow
Of its possessor. At dusk in heaven's bow
A lustrous star was born, and twinkling forth
Waxed brighter ever, outshining all north,
South, east, or west. At midnight soft I dreamed,
And then a vision, alway perfect, seemed
To come, which bending, whispered, full of bliss,
And sealed "I love thee" with a kiss.

THE FAR SEA.

Out, out beyond
  Where no eyes see —
Where clouds respond,
  There hides the key
To all this strife.
  I sent my soul
To question life.
  From out that whole
It never came.
  I stand and wait,
But naught's the same —
  The calms that sate,
The storms that blind.
  The suns sink low,
The earth-bonds bind —
  My soul must know!

THE LULLABY.

The dreaming night stirred in its sleep,
And moaned, and endless 'gan to weep,
And writhed with pain and heaving breast
As vainly, vainly seeking rest.

And piteous then, with watchful eye,
Earth rocked, and crooned a lullaby,
Until the fevered dream had fled,
And peering stars shone forth instead

Of blackened clouds and wrinkled brow,
And images of man that plough
Their weary way through dreams of night,
And waste its strength, and dull its might.

NAMELESS.

Within my little room,
Where until long Life's doom
No sound dares enter in,
Where air is parched and thin,
Where barren couch and desk
Dreams' emptiness attest,
One day, as ill and worn,
I mused on hopes long gone,
Through frosted window-pane
A sun-ray bright and plain
Dropped to the cold-hued floor,
And wand'ring to the door
Waited for me to look.
Slowly I closed my book, —
Too slow, alas, for there,
Vanishing down the stair,
An outlined form I see,
But fast in flight, ah me !

IN THE FENWAY.

Way in the east
The evening waves begin,
Foaming and high
The surf-clouds roll and spin,
Hue upon hue
The mirrored windows take,
Threadlike and black
The trees sink to the lake,
Slow falls the air
With roar of silenced day,
Thoughts creep unfed,
The winds in surges play.
Deep in Life's heart
The ghosts of longings rise;
Wist cords vibrate,
Blanched and drawn waste the skies,
Night lies adrift,
And wishes tiptoe spread, —
Say, when will Hope
Learn to bury its dead!

"EGO."

To bare my soul —
  For what — for fame?
To play Fate's role
  And reap heart's blame?

Nay, be life short,
  'Tis far too long
To risk the Port,
  And stain my song!

God may see fit
  To Bondage press,
But what of it?
  I am no less!

WEARINESS.

I.

I sit at my window and gaze without
At the darkening strength of the world about,
And list to the restless sighs of the waves,
And the cricket's chant as he endless raves,
And mark where the sky shows blanching cheeks,
The horizon-line where the star-course leaks —
And peer at the lights till they seem to be
A part of the ocean and part of me.

II.

And then the trees, how they motionless stand,
Like the wonder-struck 'fore the promised land;
And at last as I look and look again,
The "weltschmerz" stirs, and its heart-woven pain,
And the calm is gone, and the peace has fled,
And weary I turn to my untouched bed —
For the stillness hurts, and the suffering sea
Has entered deep into the soul of me.

SUN-GORGE.

Down where the nest of cloud-foam rests,
  The sun in gorgeous sweeps of gold
Comes pouring, rolling through the crests,
  In lavish coinage untold.

And where the ooze most wanton drips,
  Through rifts of passioned space and sky,
The reeling gorge heaves dark-stained lips,
  And blinds my sight — then turns to fly.

CHOICE.

If out into the anchored bay,
  That stagnant lies 'neath star-mown dome,
My ship could steer in silent way,
  I would not wish for such a home.

But out into the boundless blue,
  That spanning flees, and ever grows,
There will I turn my rudder to,—
  There will I face the tempest's woes.

COMPENSATION.

I stood amongst a crowd one day,
All restless images of clay,
And oh, the lonesome ache that flew
And coursed in pain my being through !

I stood one day at even-song,
And watched night's lashes drooping long,
And oh, the gladness in the thought,
That Nature understood unsought !

SURGE.

Night lies wind-seared and helpless all about,
Unfurling deep its thought-sails and its doubt,
Flapping life's problems in the face of sleep,
Wrecking all judgment, and heart's memory heap,
Sobbing that God may pour His seeming best,
Yet Love withholding cannot make life blest.

"TELL, O SEA!"

Tell me, sea, in your restless might,
What is the shadow in the light;
Tell me, sea, in your endless plaint,
What is the sinner in the saint;
Tell me, sea, in your careless ease,
What is the heart-worm in the trees;
Tell me, sea, in your voiceless deeps,
What is the Dream that pitying peeps;
And tell, O sea, in whispered tones,
What the soul, and its stifled moans!

MOODS.

I.

Like snowdrifts hurling, mound on mound,
Into the caverns of remotest sound,
E'er striving, pushing on to win,
All obstacles removing, out, within,
No quarter granting, all for self,
Like unto misers with ill-gotten pelf,
Storing at last the useless heap
In darkest doomsday, where the angels weep;
Too late for aught but harvest dank,
Of sin-fruits and of panting souls that sank.

II.

One moment so, and e'en the next,
Like troubled waters by the storm gods vexed,
But gleaming peaceful through the might
Of earth and sun, comes change again, and sight
Of good. Like tranquil valleys sweet
In Nature's smiles, where mounts a-tiptoe meet
The bending skies, and yearning kiss
To life the rose hues of awakening bliss;
Where streams flow on in dreaming rest,
And birds sing dim above, in loving blest;
Where grass and flowers rejoice to live;
Where men to men in hope their dues full give;
Where insects' hum sole murmur reigns,
And God in mist arises from the plains;
While over all the earth broods great
Old Mother Nature caring for her mate.

MYSTERY.

Wind-veinéd rise the ghosts of yesterday;
Straining I pierce the gyres of haunted lay,
And see far out where swirls the empty space
A mighty shadow cross the Master's face.
Silent I peer and trace the moon-track, where
Nature, ript open, lays its mystery bare,
Where Love stands restive, poising with barred shaft,
Where lab'ring fall the deeps of earth-womb's craft —
There where the planets cower from their sun —
There where the dream and goal and sight are one.

"LINES."

A breath of heaven on the ground,
There where the sun sways frenzied round;

A burst of heaven in the air,
There where the leaves rush by and stare;

A hint of heaven out beyond,
There where the sea cements shore's bond;

But most of all from every part,
A whispered heaven in my heart!

THE SNOW.

Dame Nature's hard heart was softened last night,
  She pitied the earth in its ache and its care,
So she gently spread o'er the prostrate might
  A cover of seamless "white wonder" there.

And lo! in the morn, when in careless haste
  The Sun from his glorious dreams arose,
The silent face of the purified waste
  Smiled lost in peace through the gem-filtered snows.

THE GREATER I.

The Greater I sat down aghast.
"Is this," it said, "all that thou hast?
A tuneless world of careless words,
And deeds that lag in thoughtless herds?"
"Nay, see," the Other in me cried,
"Thou shalt not so my days deride—
See, see, the things I wished to do,
The many dreams that fruitless grew,
Is it all naught, if that the night
Loomed ere the day had reached its height?"

Then laughed the Greater I that stood,
All trembling, like Love's babyhood,
And with strained breath, and deepening sighs,
Like harvesting of memoried sighs,
"Nay, dream, thou child, thou lesser part,
Nor wake through me to breathe life's smart;

When thou shalt see how weak the trend
Endeavored, and how small the end;
Then shalt thou learn the road thou walkst
Was other far from that thou soughtst."

RESPONSIBILITY.

The world is as we make it through and through,
The coloring that we give it old or new,
Is our day's passage on our varying mood,
Is our heart's answer to the day's hard food.
If peace attended night, sweet breathes the morn,
If sorrow deadened light, ah, how forlorn
The whole of nature turns, the bud and fruit,
Events of past or future fail to suit,
Life drags aweary, Faith sinks low in dread,
The hope of yesterday to-day lies dead;
Man's waking memory is short at best,
And Satan endless laughs at human test;
Man blames his God, his "Fate," Dame Nature, Life,
His neighbor even, as the cause of strife,
Forgetting ever in himself to search
For moods, for thoughts, for words, or looks that lurch
Unalteringly into a spreading act,
And that once writ, can will of man retract?

MIRAGE AT DUSK.

The dreaming pulling of the sheet of night,
The burnished deepening of the shrouding light,
The drunken swirl of Nature's great desires,
The human plaything that the gorge inspires,
The outlined dwellings of the brothered kin,
The heart-struck breast-wounds of the sky's cleft ring,
The very silence and the unsolved pain,
The thought that we may never see again!

LONENESS.

I.

The utter loneness of the human soul,
The wakening to the "einsamkeit" of life,
The knowledge that the God cannot console, —
This is the echo of the youthful strife.

II.

The fallen Cupid of forgotten dreams,
The piteous coldness of the cloakéd mates,
The scanty warmth of fleeing moments' beams, —
This is the life contemptuous of "too lates."

III.

The rush rebellious to be understood,
The panting angel of the higher I,
Reaction then, and shamefaced, impulsed good, —
This is the course of age, and habits' dye.

DECREED.

Love is rich and full and deep;
Love must climb where walls are steep;
Lives must yearn where hearts may peep;
Eyes must dry while souls still weep;
Self-seeds start the ashes-heap;
Man must look before he leap —
As he sows so shall he reap!

PROCRASTINATION.

The mind of man puts off the deed,
Waits, and demurs, and weighs the need,
Questions, self-answers, and decides,
Ne'er eager save where gain betides;
Presses no suit without an end,
Shoves reasons forth that ill can mend,
Excuses prates to pass the "now," —
Action postponing for the "thou," —
Deceiver of itself to be,
Frightened by blind-eyed imagery, —
So shuts the door of man's best hope, —
"Do," the Redeemer, — ne'er to ope.

NIGHT–PEACE.

Night, deep brooding in quiet content,
Guards over the Earth, to dreamland sent,
And the wind pours down in rustling ease,
Till the leaves, upturning to the breeze,
Show white-bared cheeks to the starless sky,
Where swelling clouds their business ply,
While the secret messengers of day
Hang voicelessly where the shadows play.

TRANSITION.

Like a sparrow on the wing,
Like a dewdrop of the spring,
So soon gone!

Like a pair of roguish eyes,
Like ambitions 'neath the skies,
So soon dull!

Like a joy that's born to-day,
Like a glistening sunbeam's ray,
So soon cold!

Like a promise spoken soft,
Like a virtue tried too oft,
So soon void!

Like a summer's golden hopes,
Like a struggling heart that opes,
So soon dead!

Like a life that's born to pain,
Like a soul that's striven in vain,
So soon lost!

FINIS.

The wind is pushing through the broken air,
The stars are peering through the dark void there,
The locust's haunt is dying on the breeze,
The panting night is pressing through the trees,
The sea is quiet in its mighty pain,
And I have dreamt the old dream out again.

ERRATA.

Page 18, line 3. — "Wine-tops" should be "Vine-tops."

Page 21, line 20. — Period should be omitted after "song."

Page 52, line 6. — "Guest" should be "quest."

Page 87, line 8. — "Life contemptuous" should be "lip-contemptuous."

FINIS.

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From me to you,

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